

The animal seemed to moan or sniff about for a time, and then squatted down in the usual cat manner and defaecated, of course this act was not distinctly visible, but the signs were there when I examined the place later. Now comes the interesting part, after defaecation he moved forward a few paces in a stiff legged manner, and then let out a very high pitched cry, almost a squeak, best described as a 'pook' and at the same time stretched out and seemed to shake one of his hind legs, then a step forward, another call and a shake of the other leg. In all he made this call five times.

I have heard of tigers making this 'pook' call but never of a leopard, and I shall be very interested to hear if anyone has had a similar experience?

Finally I did not manage to shoot this beast, though he came on to the kill well after dark, as, on my switching on my torch he leapt into cover like a flash. I sat tight and after a short time, back he came and was off again on the switch of the light. A third time he came and on this occasion I allowed him to feed for about fifteen minutes (the kill was well pegged down) before taking up the rifle, first pressure taken on the trigger, but it was no use, he was off like lightning and for good this time.

I was once stationed for four years on a garden absolutely infested by leopards, where I saw and shot many of them, but never heard such a cry. The lightning reaction to the torchlight is also quite out with my previous experience.

Altogether a very interesting beast.

POWAI T.E. & P.O.,

U. ASSAM.

12th August 1945.

T. E. H. SMITH.

[The peculiar call of the tiger described popularly as 'pooking' is interpreted by some observers as a mate call. But it is indicated that the call has been frequently uttered as a direct result of disturbance by human agency and as such is probably an expression of surprise, suspicion or alarm. This call is not commonly observed among panthers.—EDS.]

5.—NORTHERN LIMITS OF THE RUSTY-SPOTTED CAT (*PRIONAILURUS R. RUBIGINOSUS* GEOFF.)

In the new *Fauna* the paragraph on the distribution of this cat reads 'Southern India' and there is reference to one specimen taken at Khandalla by Phillip Gosse.

It might be of interest to record that on the 2nd Feb. 1941 I shot one near Suriamal on the Wada road about 70 miles north of Bombay. This cat appeared to be fairly common in that area as we had seen them several times before when motoring

through at night, but had mistaken them for stray domestic cats from nearby villages.

While I hope to obtain more specimens when travelling becomes easier, I might mention that another cat shot in the same area a few weeks later has been identified as a domestic cat, though a few spots on its flanks suggest that it may have a strain of this or some other wild cat in its origin.

MESSRS. FAIZ & Co.,
75, ABDULREHMAN ST.,
BOMBAY, 3.
12th July, 1945.

HUMAYUN ABDULALI.

6.—SAMBAR 'SWINGS'.

I wonder whether any members have seen—and, if so, can explain the purpose of—the Sambar's *jhoola* (swing). Whatever the purpose, I think it will explain a fairly well known superstition of the jungle people, concerning that deer.

In the month of January, but many years ago, I was shooting from a camp, which I was obliged (from the lack of fresh water) to pitch close to a small wayside station, Bahilpurwa, on the Jhansi-Manikpur line; with Manikpur the next station to the south and Karwi on the north. For a few miles northward from Bahilpurwa was a dense belt of thorn (Ber) Jungle, interspersed with trees and harbouring most of the game in that block—bear, sambar, chital, a few chinkara, in the thinner portions, and a few roving panther (though sambar were plentiful, tiger had not been there for about 10 years then—the dense thorn might explain this, for it held many small herds and solitary stags). On the east of the thorn belt and as far as the railway was tree jungle—some of which was being felled. Westwardly, the thorn gave to more open tree jungle—which contained a 'famine tank', close to the thorn belt. Roughly eastward of the tank, and near to where a straggly nullah seemed to separate the thorn from the tree jungle on the east, was a small glade where I saw one definite '*jhoola*' and two other, seemingly, attempted ones. A local villager had guided me to that glade to show me a 'soiling pool' in it; this was drying up then, but had not caked or crusted over and the mud, still boggy, showed signs of very recent use—the innumerable, short, curly hairs in it proving the user to be a sambar. The Indian then directed my attention to the broad trunk of a banyan tree at the edge of the glade and, when we arrived there, pointed at a thin branch overhead, saying repeatedly '*jhoola*'.

What I saw was this: Upon the trunk of the banyan, facing the glade, were blobs and smears of moist, as well as dry, clay—the bark bearing reddish abrasions and scorings in many adjacent places—up to a height of about 5 feet. A couple of feet above this the trunk forked to right and left upwards, the large right